

Kawasaki Syndrome

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What is Kawasaki syndrome?

Kawasaki syndrome is an uncommon illness characterized by a high fever and rash. The cause of the illness is unknown.

Who gets Kawasaki syndrome?

Young children, particularly under the age of two, are at highest risk. Worldwide, the illness is most commonly seen in Asia.

How is Kawasaki syndrome spread?

It is unknown how this condition is spread. It does not appear that you can get it from another person, but there have been clusters of illness which suggests that it may be caused by an infectious agent.

What are the symptoms of Kawasaki syndrome?

Typically there are three stages of illness. In the first stage, the child has a high fever, rash, swollen lymph nodes, pink eye, mood changes and is very grumpy. This stage lasts about ten days. The second phase lasts about two weeks and is characterized by an increase in platelets in the blood, peeling skin and the temperature returning to normal. The third stage is a long convalescent phase when the child begins to feel better. Severe complications may occur in 10-25% of patients.

Does past infection make a person immune?

Most children who have had Kawasaki syndrome will not get it again.

What is the treatment for Kawasaki syndrome?

Once Kawasaki syndrome has been diagnosed, doctors can give specific treatments to help reduce the symptoms. Complete recovery may take several weeks.

How can Kawasaki syndrome be prevented?

Because the specific cause of Kawasaki syndrome is unknown, there is no known way to prevent the illness. Since it is probably not spread from person-to-person, no disease control measures are necessary when a child in a day care center is diagnosed with this condition.

